

Emergency evacuation planning

Planning will ensure the safety of employees who have disabilities during emergencies, and provide protection against the risks associated with emergencies. A good emergency plan not only helps ready staff to respond, it saves businesses time and money after an emergency.

Communication is key

The first step in developing an emergency plan is to provide for clear communication between employers and employees regarding staff who will need assistance during an emergency. If emergency evacuation equipment is needed and individuals need to be trained, then that needs to be part of the overall emergency plan. At a minimum, employers should provide for the following:

- Emergency alarms and signs showing the emergency exit routes.
- Designated areas for rescue assistance with escape routes, a closing door, a way to block smoke from entering the room, a window, a way to write on the window to alert rescuers that people are in this location; and respirator masks.
- Implementing a buddy system so teams can locate and assist each other in emergencies.
- Testing the plan and evaluating the results to make necessary improvements.

Employee kits

Employee emergency kits help prevent further trauma in the face of an emergency. A kit might include the following items.

- A small supply of food and water (include food and water for a service animal as well).
- Flashlight, radio, extra batteries and a small first-aid kit.
- A whistle to get the attention of co-workers or emergency personnel.
- A copy of the Emergency Plan, which should include emergency phone numbers and any medical information for the first responders.



For more information about emergency preparedness, visit these web sites:

www.disability.state.mn.us

www.codeready.org

www.ready.gov